

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the recognition of patentable subject matter in the present application.

Applicants hereby add new claim 25 and cancel claims 6 and 23. Accordingly, claims 1-5, 7-22 and 24-25 are pending in the present application.

Claims 1-3, 7, 10-11 and 21 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) for anticipation over U.S. Patent No. 5,896,253 to Dirne et al. Claim 4 and 23 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) for obviousness over Dirne. Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) for obviousness over Dirne in view of Applicant(s) Admitted Prior Art (AAPA). Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) for obviousness over Dirne in view of Japanese Patent No. JP 5-143956 ("JP '596"). Claim 22 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) for obviousness over Dirne in view of U.S. Patent No. 5296,993 to Aboaf et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and urge allowance of the present application.

Referring to independent claim 1, the method includes limitations of previously pending claim 6. Claim 1 is believed to be allowable in view of the indication in the Office Action that claim 6 recites allowable subject matter. Allowance of claim 1 is respectfully requested in the next Action.

The claims which depend from independent claim 1 are in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed above with respect to the independent claim as well as for their own respective features which are neither shown nor suggested by the cited art.

Claim 24 is allowed.

Referring to new claim 25, the method includes the limitations of previously pending claims 1, 7 and 8. Applicants respectfully submit claim 25 is allowable in view of the indication in the Office Action that claim 8 recites allowable subject matter. Allowance of claim 25 is respectfully requested in the next Action.

Applicants have canceled the claims rejected over the prior art and only claims which have been indicated to recite allowable subject matter are pending. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the application is in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request allowance of all pending claims.

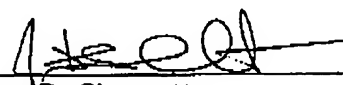
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Amendment B*

The Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned if the Examiner believes such would facilitate prosecution of the present application. The undersigned is available for telephone consultation at any time during normal business hours (Pacific Time Zone).

Respectfully submitted,

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Amendment B